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[ORGANIZED APRIL 10th, 1879]

SYNOPSIS

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA,

LATE OLD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION,

DURING THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

Sed fugit interea, fugit irrevocabile tempus.

PITTSBURG:

PRINTED BY MYERS, SHINKLE & CO., CORNER WOOD STREET AND VIRGIN ALLEY.

1884.

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IN EXCHANGE
JAN 5 - 1915

List of Officers for 1884-1885.

President:

HON. JOHN E. PARKE.

Vice Presidents:

Hon. T. J. BIGHAM,
JAMES P. FLEMING,
R. MILLER, Jr.
Hon. WM. LITTLE,
JOHN RIPPY,
Capt. JOHN M. KILLEN.

Treasurer:

JOHN FULLERTON.

Recording Secretary:

W. M. GORMLY.

Corresponding Secretary:

DAVID W. MILLER.

REPORT

OF

COMMITTEE ON REVISION.

We, the Committee appointed at the last meeting of our Society to revise the Synopsis of our proceedings during the five years since our organization, respectfully report that we have completed the work assigned us, and the result of our labor will be found on the following pages.

CAPT. JOHN M. KILLEN,
REV. A. A. LAMBING, A. M.,
PROF. LEONARD H. EATON,
Com. on Revision.

PREFACE.

Few sections of our country open a more pleasing and varied field of study and research to the historian than Western Pennsylvania. Commencing with the mound-builders of pre-historic times, and passing down through the Lanni Lenape and other aboriginal tribes to the day when the last remnant of the red race forever disappeared from our midst, such names as those of Shingiss, Guyasutha, Aliquippa, Captain Jacobs and Pontiac are presented to his mind. When the French entered upon the scene the list of historic names was continued in La Salle, Chartier, Céloron, Joncaire, Contrecœur, Jumonville, Beaujeux and others. Finally, among the names which the English and colonists have inscribed on the pages of our history, are those of Trent, Braddock, Dunbar, Armstrong, Grant, Forbes, Bouquet, and last and greatest, George Washington.

Of the early struggles that marked the different changes of rulers, the annalist may begin with those of the savage tribes for the mastery over these once vast forests, long before the dawn of authentic history, and study to sift the truth as far as may be from the mass of conflicting myths and traditions. With the arrival of the French, and their bloodless victory over the colonists under Ensign Ward, began the deadly struggle in which it may be said without exaggeration that the spot upon which Pittsburg now stands was for a time the central point in the world's history; its possession being disputed by the two leading civilized nations of Europe. The battles of the Great Meadows, Braddock's Field, Kittanning, Ligonier, and Grant's Hill, with the fall of forts Duquesne, Machault or Venango, Le Bœuf, and Presqu' Isle, the destruction of the last three, the siege of Fort Pitt, and the concluding victory of Bushy Run, in the conspiracy of Pontiac, are the footprints which that protracted struggle has left on the sands of time.

Passing through the later Indian depredations on the frontiers, the historian arrives at the patriotic and noble part which the citizens of Western Pennsylvania played in the war of 1812, and that with Mexico, to the more recent times when in the late rebellion, Pennsylvania sent forth her marshalled hordes to maintain the unity of our great republic. Add to this the record of our religious, educational, commercial, mining, manufacturing, oil producing and agricultural interests, and the local historian will have a field for the exercise of his industry and research than which few could be more pleasing or profitable.

Yet, strange as it may appear, it was not until very recently that an historical society was organized in this portion of our state. Some persons, indeed, busied themselves in collecting and preserving the records of our early days, but they were satisfied with the consciousness that they possessed in their memories and their libraries a fund of knowledge not within the reach of the great mass of the people. Others imparted a portion of their treasure to the public in books and papers. But while all recognized the advantage and many felt the necessity of an organized society for the collection and preservation of our local history, and were forced to confess that we were far behind many less favored sections of the country, none seemed disposed to move effectively in the matter; so much so that the Society which is now established among us is the result of accident rather than of premeditated design, as the reader will see in the sequel. Nor need we wonder at this, for our vast industries require labor rather than thought, and our people prefer making money to enjoying it.

The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania owes its origin to the following circumstances: In the spring of 1879 a number of our older citizens organized "The Old Residents' Association of Pittsburg and Western Pennsylvania," composed of those who had spent at least fifty years in this part of the State, for the purpose of meeting at certain times to converse and refresh their memories on "the deeds of the days of other years." Beneath those gray and venerable locks were naturally found to be stored away many inter-

esting and valuable reminiscences that should it was felt, be put on record and preserved for future generations. Written papers began in time to form a part of the exercises, the original plan was so far modified as to admit persons not so ripe in years, and imperceptibly the foundation was laid of an historical society. It only remained to change the name which was soon done, and the Association assumed the title of "The Historical Society of Pittsburg and Western Pennsylvania." The propriety of a further change of name was soon apparent; it, too, was made, and we now take our place among similar organizations as "The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania."

The following pages are but an abstract of the minutes of the Society's meetings under its several forms, and as such are respectfully submitted to the members of the Society, our citizens in general and our sister societies throughout the country, in the hope that they will look with encouraging indulgence on our incipient efforts in the noble work of collecting and preserving our country's history.

A. A. L.

A SYNOPSIS OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA.

As a Society we are now at the close of the first five years of our organization, and are on the threshold of the sixth year of our existence. It will not be out of place then to review the work we have accomplished in the past, note our imperfections and take warning thereby, that in the future our work may be done with more judgment. With the experience we have gained it is hoped at the close of the decade of our Society, we shall have laid aside our swaddling clothes and entered upon the course of our manhood for more effectual work.

In the spring of 1879, William Rinehart, John Fullerton and the recording secretary, held several interviews in relation to the calling of a public meeting of all citizens, native and foreign, male and female, who had resided in the county fifty years and upwards. The result of these conferences was the calling through the press of such a meeting in the Methodist Protestant Church, Fifth avenue, April 10th, 1879. It is not with any feeling of egotism that this Society claims that the meeting was one of the largest and most dignified assemblages that ever convened in the city. A finer collection of gray heads was never before witnessed.

On motion of Mr. Rinehart, the Rev. James Allison, D. D., was called to the chair, when the following persons were elected officers: Vice-Presidents, Thos. Simmons, L. Peterson, John Rippy, Henry Rea, Sr., George Shiras, Reuben Miller, Jr., and Gen. Thomas A. Rowley. Secretary, William M. Gormly.

The chair called on the venerable Rev. Thomas Sproull, D. D., Senior Professor of the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Allegheny, to lead in prayer.

Letters were read from John Vandegrift, William Little, Geo. B. Miltenberger, Mrs. Simmons, James Atkinson, and George Rodgers, regretting their inability from infirmities and other disabilities to be present.

As Mr. Rinehart was the prime mover in the matter he was called on by the chair to state the object of the meeting. He said it was, if possible, the formation of a society of old residents of Western Pennsylvania. Also the cultivating and continuing friendships long since commenced, with a view of forming a historical society.

At this meeting a committee of five on permanent organization was named. Hon. T. J. Bigham and others made addresses fully endorsing the object of a permanent organization. After tendering a vote of thanks for the use of the church, and singing the Doxology, the chair pronounced the Benediction and the first meeting dispersed.

The second meeting convened April 17, at the same place, and in the absence of Chairman Allison, his Honor, Ex-Mayor Wilson, was called to the chair. The committee reported the following list of permanent officers for the ensuing year, viz.:

Hon. T. J. Bigham, President; Rev. James Allison, D. D., Reuben Miller, Jr., Hon. Reuben McCandless, Hon. Wm. Little, John Harper, and Wm. M. Darlington, Vice-Presidents; William Rinehart, Treasurer; William M. Gormly, Secretary.

After some informal discussion the following name was adopted for the Association, viz.:

"*Old Residents' Association of Pittsburg and Western Penn'a.*"

Thus was the Society launched on the ocean of time, and, with a full corps of officers, prepared for the duties of active work.

May 15, 1879.

The meeting was held in the Select Council Chamber. President Bigham stated the object of the meeting was to

make arrangements for a daylight session on the approaching Decoration Day. Tender of grounds for the holding of the meeting was received from the Allegheny Valley Campmeeting Association. Arlington Campmeeting Association also tendered its grounds. President Bigham offered the use of his grounds for the purpose, and after a friendly interchange of opinion, the Arlington grounds at Castle Shannon were selected.

Decoration Day, May 30.

This was the first daylight meeting the Society held, and from the nature of the circumstances (the day being a legal holiday,) the people generally brought their lunch baskets with them. President Bigham called on Rev. S. Williams, D. D., of the Baptist Church, to lead in prayer. The first business was a paper from Hon. Wm. Little, who gave the correct account of the mound on Grant's Hill, which tradition would have to be the grave of General Grant, of pre-revolutionary fame. The writer stated the mound was erected by an eccentric individual as a place to cremate a dead child that he had exhumed from the graveyard of the First Presbyterian Church; but citizens interfered and prevented the cremation.

J. P. Fleming, Esq., read an exhaustive paper on the fire in the coal mines on Coal Hill. He gave proof of its existence as early as the year 1766, and traced its devious course through the hill down to the year 1840. Mr. F. quoted the views of many scientific men as to its origin.

After a recess for lunch President Bigham commenced the delivery of his inaugural address, which had been deferred to this meeting. The address abounded in thrilling incidents of this locality of over a hundred years ago, and demonstrated to the public that Mr. B. was a walking or living encyclopedia of statistical information of the western part of his native state, Pennsylvania.

Judge Parke, of Allegheny City, read a carefully prepared historical account of the Morgan family, tracing them from Wales, their native place, to their advent in Allegheny, in 1818, and describing, from his own recollection, the terrible calamity that befell them in the autumn of 1820, resulting in the cremation of their entire family of four little children on a part of the ground recently occupied by the Exposition buildings.

Before the Judge took his seat he read the Roster of the "Pittsburg Blues." This company tendered its services to the United States, in the war of 1812, which was promptly accepted, and it immediately entered the service. The following list of officers were in command: Captain, James R. Butler; First Lieutenant, Matthew Magee, First Sergeant, Elijah Troville; Second Sergeant, Isaac Williams; Third Sergeant, John Willock; Fourth Sergeant, George Haven; Corporals, Nathaniel Patterson, John W. Buring, Samuel Elliott and Isaac B. Reed; Ensign, James Irwin.

Rev. Dr. Williams made the closing address. He related many incidents that occurred over half a century ago, noted the improvements that had been made, and spoke of the cotemporaries of his youth, now nearly all gone. He felt the weight of years crowding on him, and believed that ere long many then around him would join him in the great beyond.

The day was all that could be desired, and those who came from the city were delighted with the pleasure they had in nature's garden, the woods.

Three of the members of the Society, who were present on that occasion have since received the final summons: William Rinehart, Treasurer, who died January 9, 1880; John Shipton, Vice-President, June, 1880; and Josiah King, December, 1882.

John Sampson, of Allegheny City, was the first member that died, his death occurring June 26, 1879, in the 91st year of his age.

December 18, 1879.

The next meeting was held in the Union Temperance Headquarters, Wood street and Sixth avenue. At this meeting the deaths of Dr. Jonas R. McClintock and Judge James Veech were announced. J. P. Fleming and Peter Peterson were appointed to prepare a paper to be read at the meeting on the 8th prox. Judge Parke read a paper on the accidental death of Col. James C. Butler—who had just accepted the office of Commandant of the "Pittsburg Blues"—as they were celebrating the anniversary of Perry's victory on Lake Erie, on the 10th day of September, 1821. On this latter date the Captain had given the order to fire by platoons when the sad casualty took place. Col. Butler was 32 years of age. A number of miscellaneous papers were read, and elicited considerable discussion.

January 8, 1880.

The Association convened in the same place as at the last meeting. A number of papers were submitted. President Bigham stated in his paper that this mild winter reminded him of the mild winters of 1824, 1825, 1827, and 1828. Judge Parke read a paper of his early recollection of Allegheny City.

February 5, 1880.

Mr. Fleming, as chairman of the Committee on Archives, reported progress. Committee continued. Mr. F. spoke encouragingly of the future prospects of the committee.

President Bigham, as chairman of the committee to report testimonials on the deaths of Dr. Jonas R. McClintock, James Veech and Wm. Rinehart, Treasurer of the Association, read touching papers to their memories. Mr. J. P. Fleming, on seconding the motion, paid glowing tribute to the memories of the deceased, especially of Mr. Rinehart, the late Treasurer. Mr. John Fullerton was unanimously elected Treasurer. Mr. Shipton complained that these rooms were too inaccessible on account of the two flights of stairs to climb.

March 4, 1880.

The chair announced the death of George Albree, one of our oldest citizens and a gentleman in every sense of the word. Mr. J. B. Sheriff read a paper on the difficulties of the people of the olden time to procure a sufficient quantity of the aqueous fluid for family washing on Mondays, and the erection of the first water works in Pittsburg about the year 1828.

April 8, 1880.

Since the last meeting President Bigham and John Shipton, members of the City Councils, made application to these bodies and were granted permission to gratuitously occupy the Common Council Chamber for our meetings. This being the first annual meeting, it was discovered that the Committee on the Constitution was not ready to report, but had submitted two forms, the manuscripts of which were returned to the Committee to be finally prepared and adopted at the May meeting. Tributes on the death of George Albree and Alexander Foster were adopted. Chairman Bigham gave a thrilling account of the engagement of

Col. Armstrong in destroying the Indian town of Kittanning, for which the Colonel was honored by having the county called after him. The constitution not being ready, by common consent the officers held over for another year.

May 13, 1880.

A letter was received from Gen. James A. Ekin, congratulating the members of the Association on their organization, and desiring also to become a member. The chair announced the demise of Capt. Robert Beers and John B. McFadden. Reuben Miller, Jr., was called on and responded feelingly. In speaking of Capt. Beers he said his early life was on the western waters, captain of a steamboat. The life of a steamboatman not being congenial to his conscientious scruples, and his observance of the Sabbath, in the year 1845 he disposed of his interest on the river, and henceforward until his death lived a blameless life. The Constitution of the Association was, after full and free interchange of opinion, unanimously adopted, as recorded on pages 75 and 78, inclusive, of the minutes. Judge Parke reported that one of the Council Chambers in Allegheny City could be had on the second Friday of June, proximo.

Allegheny City Common Council Chamber,

June 11, 1880.

The meeting was called to order by Vice-President Hon. Wm. Little, in the absence of President Bigham. A letter of acknowledgment from Gen. James A. Ekin, of Louisville, Ky., of his membership in this Association, and the voluntary offer to deliver a lecture at "some future time (D. V.), a sketch of the lives of Rev. John Black, D. D., Rev. Robt. Bruce, D. D., and Rev. Joseph Kerr, D. D., noble and true men, whose memory is everlasting." The death of John Shipton was announced, when Judge Parke arose and read a lengthy tribute to his memory. The paper was adopted and ordered to be engrossed on the minutes. The death of Jacob Painter, May 14, 1880, was also announced. Chairman Little and John F. Jennings spoke of the worth of Mr. Painter as a benefactor in providing the means by which a vast number of working men might have steady em-

ployment. Judge Parke read a thrilling account of the firemen's riot that occurred July 16, A. D. 1849, in Allegheny City. The interesting description awakened great interest in the Association.

September 9, 1880.

The summer vacation now over, the regular monthly meetings were resumed. President Bigham gave his views on the subject of "Slavery in Pennsylvania," in which he stated that the institution had no practical hold in Pittsburg, but only a nominal place here. Mr. J. B. Sheriff recollected seeing a slave near Saw Mill Run who was about 80 years old and belonged to the Brawdy family. On account of his age and inability to work Moses Brawdy tried to shove him on the township for support, but the township authorities took the matter to court, where, under the Emancipation act, the court decided that all old slaves had to be maintained by their masters. Judge Parke and David W. Miller, Esq., gave their recollections on the same subject, the former stating that he had seen slaves on Neville Island, the property of Gen. Neville, in 1817. W. W. Wallace submitted a paper giving his recollections of over half a century ago. When a lad, over sixty years ago, flour was sold in Pittsburg for a "five franc piece," the common price was one dollar a barrel; wheat, 12½ to 20 cents per bushel; good beef, 1½ to 2½ cents per pound, and sheep were killed by the hundreds for the pelts, which were sent to the eastern cities and sold, the carcasses being taken to Allegheny and burned as there was no sale for them. Mr. Wallace gave many other incidents of the olden time. Mr. J. B. Sheriff stated that during his apprenticeship he bought peaches in the Pittsburg market for a "fip" (6¼ cents) a barrel. Mr. J. P. Fleming gave an amusing account of the old Quakers, Moravians, Mennonites, Covenanters, etc. The latter still cling to Rouse's version of David's Psalms, and refuse to vote, as the Constitution of the United States has not the name of God in it, and therefore they cannot take the oath of allegiance.

October 4, 1880.

Rev. Richard Lea, D. D., read a carefully prepared paper on his recollections of "Old Penn Street," now Penn avenue, from 1821 to this date, covering a period of 59 years. The many

changes which have taken place during that period seem like a dream, that awakens memories of the past, and in imagination the audience was carried back to more youthful days. The chair then introduced the Rev. Father A. A. Lambing, pastor of St. Mary of Mercy's Church, who gave an interesting account of the establishment of the Catholic Church in this city. "On April 16, 1754, the fort began by the English in the previous February was captured by the French, and Fort Duquesne was soon finished. Rev. Dennis Baron was chaplain of the French forces and was the first priest or minister of any religious denomination in Pittsburg. In November, 1758, the French were driven out and nothing further of the history of Catholicism is known until 1792, when the Rev. Benedict Joseph Flaget, afterward first Bishop of Louisville, stopped here from May to November, performing the duties of his office in a private house, and ministering to the French inhabitants and French soldiers. * * * * At the beginning of the present century not more than half a dozen Catholic families had settled in Pittsburg. In 1808 Rev. W. F. X. O'Brien was the first priest to permanently settle in Pittsburg. The first chapel was built on the corner of Liberty and Washington streets; it was commenced in the spring of that year, and was dedicated in 1811. * * * * In 1816 the Catholic population was estimated at 300. At the present time (October, 1880,) there are 40 churches and chapels in the two cities, and 24 in the county; one bishop and 62 priests in the two cities, and 70,000 Catholics, making a grand total of the two cities and county of 1 bishop, 85 priests, 64 churches, and 85,000 of a Catholic population."

President Bigham read a sketch of his aunt, Mrs. Peggy Christy, who reached her 100th year on the 29th of September, 1880. Mr. B. visited the old lady on the occasion, and found her hale and hearty at her home in Westmoreland county, Pa.

Reuben Miller, Jr., gave an account of the first steamboat that ascended the Allegheny river, in the year 1829, and which was named after the Beautiful River. It attracted universal attention from the natives along the up-river, who came to the river for miles to see the wonderful phenomenon.

Captain Alex. Hay gave his recollection of the "Boys in Blue," on their return from the war of 1812.

The following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That this Association tender its sincere sympathy to the afflicted relatives of the late terrible railroad disaster at the 28th street crossing, on Saturday evening, October 9th, 1880.

NOTE.—With those killed outright and the mangled that have since died the loss of life amounted to 30, with several that may not recover from their wounds.

Rev. Dr. Lea gave an amusing account of Samuel Ewalts' scalping an Indian in this vicinity during the Revolutionary war; he also related some peculiarities of Gen. Wayne.

November 11, 1880.

Capt. John M. Killen submitted a paper on the life of John Nicholson, deceased, paying a glowing tribute to one who has done much to promote the industries of Pittsburg. He was connected with the firm of Arthurs, Nicholson & Co., extensive founders, of this city.

The secretary read a paper entitled "Penn Pictures of Old Merchants of forty and fifty years ago, and their mode of doing business in this city in those early days."

Capt. J. M. Killen gave his recollections of the Rev. Father McGuire, at one time a popular priest of this diocese.

James Irwin exhibited an original list of Grand and Petit Jurors for the April session of the Criminal Court of Allegheny County, in the year 1817.

Capt. Killen read a paper on the olden time of "Bundling," a custom in vogue in other days; a disappointed love affair was the result. Some of the dignified Judges of the present day figured as council when the case was tried in the Courts.

December 9, 1880.

Ex-Alderman Black submitted a statement giving an account of a market house that at one time stood on Second avenue between Smithfield and Wood streets, on a plot similar to the one on Second avenue, between Grant and Ross streets, which latter space is now used as a small park.

The Rev. J. C. Boyd, in behalf of the United Presbyterian Ministerial Association, submitted a history of the founding of that body in Allegheny county, of which the following is a brief synopsis:

The Associate and Associate Reformed Churches, the former had preaching in Allegheny county in the month of October, 1773. The following ministers were first sent to preach to members of the Associate Church in this place and vicinity, viz.: Revs. John Smith and John Rogers; but in the year 1775 Revs. Proudfit and Henderson arrived and the latter was ordained and installed pastor of the Bethsaida congregation, Elizabeth township. At the commencement of this century there were not more than three or four congregations in the county. During the first five years of this century what are now known as the First United Presbyterian Churches of Pittsburg, St. Clair and Mifflin Churches, and possibly one or two others, were organized. In the year 1810 St. Clair and Mifflin, which formed one pastoral charge, had 106 communicants. Bethsaida, Robinson Run, Union and the First Church, Pittsburg, had probably each an equal number. Rev. Robert Bruce, D. D., was pastor of the the church in Pittsburg. The United Presbyterian church in this county has 56 ministers, 55 congregations and 9,509 communicants. The baptized youth not in full communion, who are not included in this number, probably amount to 40,000. The adherents may be set down at 1,000, which would give a total for this county of 50,509.

Mrs. C. Simpson, of Green Tree, Allegheny county, Pa., stated in a paper which she read, that she was born in Pittsburg in the year 1800. Her recollections of prominent men and incidents that took place 60 years ago and upwards, awakened much interest during the reading of the paper.

President Bigham, in some remarks on the severity of former winters, said they were more severe then than at the present time, for as civilization advances they become less severe. He gave a thrilling account of the great flood of February, 1832, when the rivers rose to the unprecedented height of 35 feet, submerging the lower parts of the two cities and causing extraordinary damage all along their course.

Rev. J. F. Core, of the Smithfield street M. E. Church, being present, responded to an invitation to address the meeting. He said he was pleased to be present to hear of events that occurred long before he was born, and he hoped the matters of fact now

being brought out would be carefully preserved, and in the future a volume would be written which would be a valuable addition to the literature of Pittsburg and Western Pennsylvania. At the close of the meeting the reverend gentleman pronounced the Benediction.

January 13, 1881.

Rev. Thomas Sproull, D. D., of Allegheny City, Pa., the oldest minister in that city, submitted a paper giving his recollections of Pittsburg and vicinity from the year 1817, when a boy, in that year, he first visited this place with his father, descending the Allegheny river in the then primitive manner in canoes, bringing the product of the farm to the city. After disposing of the same, providing from the stores the supplies needed for family use, which were placed in the canoe, with poles and paddles they returned to their homes. In the fall of 1828 he came to this city and finished his literary studies at the Western University, then under the tutorage of those able educators, Rev. John Black, D. D., and Rev. Robert Bruce, D. D., whose names and fame gave the institution a *prestige* that it has enjoyed since its infancy. The following persons graduated in the class of 1829, viz.: Andrew Bowen, George D. Bruce, Andrew Burke, Thomas Sproull and John Wallace.

Mr. Robert Anderson, of Kittanning, Pa., a former Pittsburger, gave a very interesting history of this city over half a century ago. His recollection differs somewhat from others, but in the main there is not much discrepancy.

John F. Jennings presented the *Commonwealth*, a paper printed in Pittsburg, February 26, 1806. Reuben Miller, Jr., presented a copy of *Pittsburg Mercury*, June 14, 1826. President Bigham read an able paper on the early building of court houses, market houses, public sewers, etc.

February 10, 1881.

Mr. Hastings, one of the first iron workers in this city, gave a lengthy account of the early manufacture of iron, together with the names of the mill owners, and a description of the first invention for making angle-iron, with many other items of interest that occurred at that period.

Josiah Copley, Esq., a former editor of the Pittsburg *Gazette*, read a paper on the mode of conducting public houses over half a century ago. They were first known as inns, then taverns, hotels and saloons, as they have been severally termed within his knowledge. The writer says, "the tendency is not toward improvement." In that respect the writer closes by saying, "The other days were better than the present."

H. G. Wells, President of the Michigan Pioneer Society, sends the congratulations of his Society, and a copy of the proceedings of their annual meeting. The chair was instructed to reply to the communication extending cordial salutations.

Capt. John M. Killen gave a history of the first theatre in the city. It was a unsightly old wooden building, was situate on Third street now Third avenue, below Smithfield street, and on the boards trod some of the celebrated actors of the country.

March 10, 1881.

President Bigham stated that Friday, the 4th inst., was the two hundredth anniversary of the signing of the charter (by Charles II.) of Pennsylvania, granting it to William Penn. The chair stated that the two hundredth anniversary of William Penn's arrival on the good ship "Welcome," would be celebrated at Chester, Pa., in October, 1882.

A letter was received from R. Patterson, of the *Presbyterian Banner*, desiring information of Rev. Solomon Spalding and Sidney Rigdon, which persons had some connection with the "Book of Mormon."

Reuben Miller, Jr., submitted his recollections of the merchants on the west side of Wood street, in the year 1810, giving the names of the occupants of each house. At a future meeting he will give the names of the business men on the street.

President Bigham read a carefully prepared paper on Penn's grant of land in the "Manor of Pittsburg," in 1766; he also gave a history of the far famed litigation of the Monongahela wharf. This important case was decided by the Supreme Court, in 1832, in favor of the city.

Capt. J. M. Killen read an amusing account of a trial before Judge McClure, nearly thirty years ago. The present Judge

Collier, then a young attorney, was appointed by the Court to defend the prisoner, and in an able and very adroit manner, the youthful counsellor presented arguments that could not be gainsaid, so convincing the Court and the jury of the innocence of the prisoner that after a few minutes deliberation he was acquitted.

Mr. Anderson, of Kittanning, with Mr. D. Fitzimons, gave their recollections of Pittsburg in the long ago.

April 14, 1881.

The election of officers for the ensuing year resulted as follows:

President, Thomas J. Bigham; Vice-Presidents, John E. Parke, R. Miller, Jr., Wm. Little, J. T. Fleming, John Rippy, and Dr. George S. Hays; Treasurer, John Fullerton; Secretary, W. M. Gormly.

Mrs. George Findley, of the East End, tendered the use of her grove for a daylight meeting during the coming season.

Mr. W. W. Wallace gave an interesting account of the discovery of the process of casting "chilled rolls," by a Scotchman named James Harley, in the year 1833 or '34, from which accidental discovery the high perfection of the present rolls owes its origin. He related some interesting matter concerning the late James McCully, who, notwithstanding his extreme poverty on his arrival in the city, by dint of energy and perseverance amassed a collossal fortune. McCully was a bachelor. Major Frew and other relatives acquired his fortune, which was said to be over $1,000,000.

Reuben Miller, Jr. continued his recollections of Wood street.

John B. Sheriff read a paper on the mode of building school houses in Mercer county, Pa., sixty years ago, with a description of the pedagogues of that day.

Gen. J. M. K. Snodgrass gave his views as to the location of "Logstown," a question that has occupied so much of the time of the Society heretofore.

In a communication from James M. Swank, of Philadelphia, on the first blast furnace in Allegheny county, he fixes the date in 1794, and what is known as Shadyside, on the Pennsylvania railroad, as the place.

Judge Parke read a carefully prepared tribute to the memory of the late Charles Brewer, a former merchant of this city, one well known for his many deeds of charity, and who with his great wealth, which he used with much judgment, brought good cheer to many deserving persons.

May 12, 1881.

The chair announced that he had received a letter from S. Milnor Roberts, Esq., now in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Mr. Roberts stated that he read with great pleasure the reports in the papers he received in that distant country of the proceedings of our meetings. He gave an interesting description of Brazil and its chief ruler, Dom Pedro. He is engaged there in constructing harbors, railroads and other improvements.

Captain Wm. Stewart, of Steubenville, Ohio, formerly of this city, stated that he came to Pittsburg in the year 1808, the year of the famous "Pumpkin flood." His account of the introduction of the pest known as the mosquito on a keel boat from the southern country, in 1810 or '11 was amusing. He also gave an interesting account of the first sailing vessel built and launched from the port of Pittsburg, by Brintnell Robbins, the trip down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans, the voyage to England and the capture of the vessel by the English as a pirate. The officers were sore pressed to convince our English cousins that there was such a place as Pittsburg where a vessel of such magnitude could be built. At this late day our English neighbors are as conversant with the location of our city as they are with that of New York. The venerable captain, who has passed by ten his fourscore years, as allotted by the Psalmist, was unanimously elected an honorary member of this Society.

September 14, 1881.

President Bigham said, since we last met, and during our recess, a dastardly outrage had been perpetrated on the person of the President of the United States, James A. Garfield, who had been shot down in the railroad depot, Washington City, D. C., by one Charles A. Guiteau. In view of these remarks a committee was appointed, consisting of Judge J. E. Parke, Capt. John M. Killen and Joseph T. Johnston, who in a short time reported a series of strong resolutions denouncing the act as diabolical in the extreme.

October 13, 1881.

Since the Society last met the fears of the nation have been realized: President James A. Garfield died at Long Branch, N. J., Sept. 19, 1881, at 11 o'clock, P. M. This Society, to show its utter abhorrence of such an infamous crime, and its sympathy for the bereaved widow and fatherless children, adopted a series of resolutions which will be found engrossed on the minute book, pages 152 to 156, inclusive.

The chair stated that he had received a letter from Harrison A. Gleim, Tipton, Mo., expressing kind feelings for Pittsburg, at one time his home. He resides at the first mentioned place with three widowed sisters, the motto of their home being, "Peace, Plenty, and the Pursuit of Happiness," with the "latch string out to Pittsburgers."

November 10, 1881.

"Old Time Ferries," was the subject of an elaborate paper prepared and read by Judge Parke. His record commenced before the erection of any of the many bridges that now span the rivers. It was replete with facts, anecdotes and incidents of the early times, when this place was considered an outpost of civilization.

President Bigham read a lengthy paper on the burning of Hannahstown, Westmoreland county, Pa., by the Indians, over a hundred years ago. This was the only place of legal record in all Western Pennsylvania. Westmoreland county was the only county west of the Allegheny mountains to the Ohio and Virginia State lines. The loss to the early settlers was very great, but time has renewed all long since.

John Brisbin gave his recollections of Saw Mill Run, half a century ago. He was familiar with the names of the early settlers and their customs. The meeting enjoyed the treat and requested Mr. Brisbin to continue his favors.

December 8, 1881.

A hearty vote of thanks of the Society was tendered to Andrew Carnegie, Esq., of this city for his liberal offer of a quarter million dollars to establish a free library for the use of the citizens, with the understanding that the city councils in accepting it should obligate themselves to pay six per cent. on the amount to support the same.

Wm. Cutler read a paper giving his recollections of General Lafayette's arrival in Pittsburg in 1825. Also a vivid description of a fire on Market near Liberty street, in the winter of 1822, at which Richard M. Konekee's sister and child were cremated, the parents being absent at the time the conflagration took place. He was present and saw the commencement of excavations for laying the foundation of the first Trinity Church on Sixth avenue.

Josiah Copley stated that he carried the mail on horseback in 1818, once a week from Indiana to Kittanning, and thence to Butler *via* Freeport. He related some incidents regarding the building and launching of a steamboat at Freeport, by Capt. Edward Hart, of Boston, Mass., in the same year. Capt. Hart was a gentleman of noble character.

President Bigham gave an extensive account of "How the Knights of the Golden Horseshoe" crossed the Allegheny mountains, which was full of interest and daring adventures.

Samuel C. Lewis read an article on his assisting to roll the first bar of iron in this county.

January 12, 1882.

The Secretary read a letter from Andrew Carnegie, Esq., thanking the Society for the resolutions of respect to him for his offer to found a free library in this city.

John Murdock, James Moore and Samuel C. Lewis submitted papers on the early annals of Pittsburg, recalling many incidents of the past history of this place.

The chair inquired if any one present could give the date of General Lafayette's arrival in Pittsburg. Several dates were mentioned, when the Secretary stated that Zell's Gazetteer fixed the date June, 1825.

James P. Fleming read a happily conceived paper entitled, "A Century's Retroduction." He crossed the broad Atlantic and gave much useful information regarding the old world, and recrossing, he gave a delightful view of the progress of the country in all its various branches of industry. He stated that the first newspaper published in the United States was in Boston,

Mass., September 25, 1699. Its title was *Public Occurrances both Foreign and Domestic.* It was immediately suppressed. In 1704 the *Boston News Letter* made its appearance. In 1719 the first paper was published in Philadelphia, and six years later the *New Gazette* made its appearance in that city. The writer continues and states that American enterprise leads the WORLD in all branches of journalism, the greater part of the history of which is included in the present century. The paper closes with sketches of cities and towns of the past, some of which have fallen out by the wayside, and are scarcely known, while many opulent cities, whose sites were, less than a hundred years ago, covered by forest trees, are now densely populous and prosperous.

February 9, 1882.

Judge John E. Parke prepared and read an able paper on the judiciary, bar, ministry, medical and theatrical professions. The latter profession was largely represented by the young gentlemen of bygone days. The Judge stated that he had been identified with the profession in his youthful days, and appeared before the footlights. Rev. J. J. Marks is now the only one alive who appeared with him.

President Bigham gave a very interesting account of the Bi-Centennial of the landing of William Penn, and the preparations being made at Chester, Pa., to celebrate the event October next, also the circumstances under which the State of Pennsylvania received its name.

March 9, 1882.

The Secretary read a letter from Gen. James A. Ekin, Deputy Quartermaster-General, U. S. Army, renewing a promise made some time since, of delivering a memorial lecture on the late Rev. Drs. Black, Bruce and Kerr.

Mrs. Simpson gave recollections of the great flood that swept over Smoky Island, below the north end of the suspension bridge. The house, crops and all the effects belonging to a family by the name of Brown were destroyed with the loss of the island. Great was the peril of the occupants when the water came up so rapidly. Their only means of escape to the main land being a canoe that

was unfortunately carried off. A horse-trough was quickly utilized, and the family reached the main land in Allegheny, but saved nothing except what was on their backs, house, land, crops and all had disappeared in the seething waters.

Josiah King, Esq., read a paper that he had prepared and read before the Philological Society of this city forty-two years ago, which was peculiarly interesting, as the question therein discussed is now agitating our representatives in Congress, viz.: "A canal across the isthmus." Mr. King gave his views of the route and probable cost of the ship canal connecting the two great oceans, and bringing into closer relation the nations of the old and the new world, and also the impetus that commerce throughout the world would receive. When this paper was written some who are now in our national councils were not born, and others were in their swaddling clothes. Mr. King was requested to have the same published in pamphlet form for general circulation, a request which has been complied with.

April 13, 1882.

J. P. Fleming, chairman of the committee appointed at the last meeting reported as follows:

To the President and Secretary of the "Old Residents' Association and Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania:"

Your Committee on Officers and Organization respectfully report:

First, That the present officers be re-elected for the coming year.

Secondly, That we drop that portion of our title, "Old Residents' Association," and retain the balance, viz.: "Historical Society of Pittsburg and Western Pennsylvania," by which name the Association shall hereafter be known.

Thirdly. That persons of any age who take an interest in the object of our organization be eligible to membership.

Fourthly, That our object shall be to collect and perpetuate facts relating to our local history, by securing the legendry and traditional before they pass into the region of myths.

J. P. Fleming, *Chairman.*

The report, after some discussion, was adopted, and the name of the Association will henceforth be:

"*Historical Society of Pittsburg and Western Pennsylvania.*"

The Secretary read another letter from Gen. James A. Ekin, saying that he expected to be in Pittsburg next month, and

deliver the memorials on the lives of Drs. Black, Bruce and Kerr. The General forwarded a Confederate bond for the archives of the Association.

Hon. W. A. Kuhns, of Greensburg, Pa., in a paper, gave his recollections of Pittsburg for upwards of half a century.

J. P. Fleming, Esq., presented a paper entitled "Footprints of Justice; the Bench, Bar and Scaffold." It told how justice was administered in our courts in "ye olden time."

May 11, 1882.

The Secretary read a letter from Gen. Ekin, expressing regret for his inability to be present to read his memorial. He hoped, however, to be here in the fall and meet his engagement.

Judge Parke gave his recollections of the early ministers and judges of Western Pennsylvania. Prominent as a judge was Samuel Roberts, who settled in Pittsburg in 1803, died in office in 1820, and was succeeded by the late Judge William Wilkins. Alexander Addison was admitted to the Presbytery of Redstone, December 20, 1785, and preached in the bounds of the Presbytery, but he subsequently received a call from the church in Washington, Pa. In a short time he relinquished the ministry, studied law, and in due time was admitted to the bar in Allegheny county, where he became famous as an able lawyer. He was engaged in many important cases till he was appointed Judge of the Fifth Judicial District, where he sat about twelve years on the bench.

The announcement was made that it was customary to take a recess during the summer months, until the second Thursday of September, but a vote being taken on the question, it was decided to hold a meeting on the second Thursday of June.

June 8, 1882.

The meeting assembled, but no business of importance was transacted, owing to the small number present.

September 14, 1882.

President Bigham read a lengthy article on the burning of Hannahstown, Westmoreland county, Pa., by the Indians, on the 13th of July, 1782. The centennial of the occasion was duly observed on the 13th of July last, vast multitudes being present. This Society was represented by President Bigham, who took part on the occasion.

Reuben Miller, Jr., gave another chapter of his recollections of the residents on the southeast side of Wood street, as far up as Fourth avenue. This history embraced the time the country was engaged in the war with Great Britain, 1812 to '15.

R. J. Stoney, Esq., cashier of the Anchor Bank, presented a ten dollar note of the defunct Farmers & Mechanics Bank of Pittsburg, Pa., dated April 20, 1825, letter C, No. 949, G. Luckey, cashier, John Scull, president. This bank was located on Fourth avenue, on the ground now occupied by the Iron City National Bank.

Judge Parke gave an account of the once famous "Scully Springs," that seventy years ago attracted much attention on account of their curative properties. These springs are now only a short distance from the west end of the city limits, on the south side of the Ohio river.

President Bigham gave a thrilling account of a massacre by the Indians, at Wheeling, W. Va., before civilization had made much progress. The speaker related the heroic act of a young lady in risking her life; who, when it was discovered that the ammunition was running short, left the fort during the engagement and secured a keg of powder that did good service and soon ended hostilities.

October 12, 1882.

Reuben Miller, Jr., and Judge Parke, gave further reminiscences of the past; the former on the residents of Wood street, the latter finishing his account of "Scully's Springs."

B. A. Janvier, Washington, D. C., wrote that he had a painting of Pittsburg that was executed in 1790, which he desired to sell. But as he had not given his price the Secretary addressed him a letter of inquiry to which he had not received a reply.

As an illustration of the vast increase in the value of real estate, the Secretary cited a case on Smithfield street, the lot bounded by Fifth avenue and Diamond street, and now occupied by the Howard Block. The transaction occurred nearly eighty years ago. The writer's father was a carpenter who was called on by the owner of the ground, who offered the lot for sale at $350, payable as follows: $100 the first year, $100 the second

year, and $150 the third year, to be paid for in carpenter work at the full rates of the book of prices, which were pretty high. The area of the lot is 240 feet front on Smithfield street, by 60 feet in depth on Fifth avenue and Diamond streets. On the purchaser making known these facts to his brother, he at once berated him for making such a bad bargain, giving as his reasons that his children or grand-children would never live to see the lot worth $50, as it would never be anything more than a hog-pond, which it then was, and for many years after. In a few years after Abner Updegraff bought the same lot for $750 cash, and occupied and held it until his death, when his heirs erected the handsome block that now occupies the ground. The property to-day is worth over half a million dollars, and the children of the first purchaser, as well as grand-children and great-grand-children, have lived to see the mistaken judgment of the brother who advised against the purchase. With the continued growth of the city in the next twenty-five years, the writer would predict that the value of this property will be a round million dollars.

November 9, 1882.

A letter was received from B. A. Janvier, Washington, D. C., stating that he would sell his painting of Pittsburg, executed in 1790, for $500. The offer was declined.

A testimonial of respect on the death of Ex-Mayor Alex. Hay, one of the original members of this Society, was adopted, and the proceedings ordered to be entered on the minutes, which has been done on pages 215, 216 and 217.

December 14, 1882.

The Secretary read extracts from a letter published in the *Dispatch*, December 11, written by Mrs. Jane G. Swisshelm, in which she has fallen into error in reference to an incipient riot that occurred in Pittsburg over half a century ago; the cause of the disturbance being an attempt made by Avery Allen, from the western part of New York, to give an exposure of Free Masonry in the warehouse of Daniel Speer, Liberty street, opposite Seventh avenue. The lecturer, Avery Allen, came to this city subsequent to the abduction of Wm. Morgan, of Rochester, N. Y., for a similar attempt in that city. Mrs. Swisshelm, in commenting on a sworn statement left by the late Thurlow Weed, of

Utica, N. Y., on the Morgan abduction, stated that the difficulty occurred when she was a little girl of about seven years of age, in the year 1822, when her father took her to see the exhibition. But the trouble was in fact described in the Pittsburgh *Gazette* of August 30, 1833, as taking place the night previous, hence the criticism.

Capt. J. M. Killen gave an interesting account of President Monroe's visit to Pittsburg, in the year 1817. He entered the then embryo city from the south side, descending the hill on the old Washington road and crossed the ferry at the foot of Smithfield street, the old wooden bridge being then in course of erection. He was met by a committee of citizens and handsomely entertained by the burgers.

L. D. McCandless read an account of a debating society that was organized in Birmingham (now South Side) in which two prominent citizens took part nearly fifty years ago. The gentlemen were Andrew Burt, then a glass blower (now deceased) who afterwards became celebrated as an educator and author of a grammar bearing his name; the other a wholesale grocer, and now the well known criminal lawyer, Thomas M. Marshall. He also gave a *resumé* of a murder that took place nearly sixty years ago, a short distance from the now city line, on Chartiers creek, with the arrest of the murderer and his escape from the old jail in jail alley, now Decatur street. The community at that day had not become so familiarized with homicides as at the present, hence the excitement was intense and widespread. The names are omitted on account of some of the descendants still living.

J. B. Crawford, in a communication, stated that he came to Pittsburg in 1825, and learned the clockmaking and silversmith business with John Wallace, on Market street; recalled the names of early steamboats, and remembered being present when the government officials tested cannon near Hog pond, opposite the site of the present post office.

January 11, 1883.

Since the last meeting of the Society, three of the members have been called on to answer the "last summons." Ere the close of the year 1882, died, James Lippencott, Thomas MacConnell

and Josiah King. At this meeting suitable testimonials were adopted to the memory of the departed, and engrossed on the minutes of the Society. The deceased were old citizens of Pittsburg, and enjoyed the confidence of their fellow-men; the first being a merchant, the second an able lawyer, while the last was one of the proprietors and editors of the *Commercial-Gazette*.

Capt. John M. Killen read a paper covering his recollections for a period of five years of progress of the city on the South Side and East End. The growth of these portions has been wonderful. His paper referred to changes in the early part of fifty years ago.

D. S. McCandless submitted a paper on the characteristics of the "Old Drayman," of the long ago; this class being a very important factor in the business interests of the olden time, but their occupation, "Othello like," is gone. There are only two of the old draymen in the city at this time (April 1884,) viz: John Boyd and John W. Haney. The merchandise that was formerly handled on two wheeled vehicles with long tails, or skids, is now drawn on four wheeled trucks and wagons.

Ex-Mayor McCarthy gave a vivid description of the "Pickings' Circus riot," that occurred in this city in the year 1824, in which a man named Murry was fatally shot.

Thos. Marshall described very minutely the building of the canal tunnel from Seventh avenue to Try street, in the years 1827–28, and the fatal fall of a Miss Slagle, in the deep excavation.

NOTE.—It is not generally known when the State engineers commenced the erection of this work. They intended to tunnel through the hill, expecting a rock roof but after several weeks' experience they were unable to hold the top up, engineering being then in its infancy here. Failing in this, they commenced on the top of the hill and excavated the whole till they reached the bottom when they commenced the building of the heavy brick arch, with cut stone entrances. When this was completed the earth was carted back and dumped in on the arch, and the hill was restored to its original height. The engineers of the Pennsylvania Railroad twenty years ago put a tunnel through almost on the line of the above but as they did not go so deep they had to demolish the old tunnel and penetrated the hill from either end, supporting the top as they progressed and utilizing the old canal tunnel as a sewer for drainage purposes.

March 8, 1883.

Vice President Jas. P. Fleming occupied the chair. Capt. Killen, from his remarkable fund of information, gave a racy description of the manner in which coal was transported from our hills in the vicinity of the city in the old-fashioned flat bottom boats to the western and southern markets. But the hazard being too great, a change was necessary, and the present system of barges towed by steam tugs has superseded the old system of transporting the "black diamonds" to the lower marts.

Chairman Fleming related an old time incident of one, Presly De Val, a man skilled, heroic, daring and equal to any emergency on the waters; De Val, during his rambles drifted to Japan where he was once on a vessel on which were members of the royal family, when a fire broke out. The officers losing control of the crew, prospects of a watery grave became imminent; at this juncture De Val asked the officer and the royal family to place him in command, which was promptly done, when with drawn revolvers he ordered every man to the pumps and maintaining a rigid discipline succeeded in saving the vessel and all on board.

The Secretary announced that he had a correspondence with Hon. J. W. F. White of the Court of Common Pleas, and that his honor had consented to deliver an address on the "Judiciary of Allegheny County" from its inception to the present time, and further that the trustees of the Smithfield M. E. Church, had kindly granted the use of their church edifice for the occasion, the time fixed being April 12, next.

Chairman Fleming read an interesting paper on the past and present "Postal" facilities of the country. In the "olden time" postage was charged according to the distance a letter had to travel; to New Orleans, 37½ cts., New York, 25 cts., Philadelphia, 18¾ cts., Harrisburg, 12½ cts., Greensburg, 6¼ cts. Decimal coin was not plenty, Spanish coin being in general circulation, and known as quarters, levies and fips.

April 12, 1883.

The committee appointed at the last meeting to suggest the names of officers for the ensuing year, reported the following, who were unanimously elected.

President, John E. Parke; Vice Presidents, T. J. Bigham, J. P. Fleming, R. Miller, Jr., Wm. Little, John Rippy, and Capt. J. M. Killen; Secretary, W. M. Gormly; Treasurer, John Fullerton.

The committee recommended the following which was unanimously adopted, viz: Inasmuch as the physical infirmities usually the lot of members of the human family who live beyond the age of threescore and ten years have seriously affected Hon. Thomas J. Bigham, who has been our president since the organization, your committee has concluded to comply with the desire he expressed several times last winter to be permitted to retire from the presidency of our association. In conclusion your committee recommend the adoption of the following:

Resolved, that the thanks of this Society are due and are hereby tendered to our retiring President for the valuable historical information for which we are indebted to him, and for the zeal and industry with which he has discharged his duties as our presiding officer.

(Signed,)

JOHN M. KILLEN,
S. D. MCCANDLESS, } *Committee.*
W. M. GORMLY,

The report of the committee as read was unanimously adopted and ordered to be entered on the minutes.

Judge Parke on taking the chair, in a few happy remarks thanked the Society for the honor conferred on him in elevating him to the presidency; he asked the indulgence of the members for his imperfections, and pledged himself to discharge the duties of the office to the best of his ability.

The chair introduced to the audience the Hon. J. W. F. White, of Common Pleas Court, No. 2, of Allegheny County, who delivered his able and exhaustive address entitled the

"*Judiciary of Allegheny County,*"

from the commencement of the court to the present time. The address has been printed, and is well worthy a perusal for the valuable information it contains. It is hardly necessary to state that a rising vote of thanks was tendered Judge White.

May 10, 1883.

Vice President Bigham, in an animated argument refuted the claim that Virginia at one time set up to Washington county in this State as a part of her territory. When the subject was brought before the highest judicial court of the nation for settlement the gauzy claim of the State that gloried in being the mother of Presidents, vanished in the air as thin vapor before the morning sun, and Washington county remains in the Keystone State of the Federal Arch.

Capt. Jno. M. Killen read an amusing and interesting paper from his own observation entitled, "Plantation Darkies," in which their peculiar customs were delineated in a very happy manner by the versatile captain.

September 13, 1883.

The summer recess now over, the members of the Society are prepared to continue their work.

President Parke, chairman of the committee to procure certificates for membership of the Society reported progress and asked further time to complete the work. The same gentleman read a tribute to memory of Henry B. Earl, a former merchant and to the "Manor born."

Harrison A. Gleim, of Tipton, Moniteau Co., Mo., was unanimously elected a corresponding member of this Society.

On motion of J. P. Fleming that Article 12 be so altered and amended that the office of Corresponding Secretary be created, the amendment receiving a two-third vote was declared by the chair as carried.

The Recording Secretary was elected to the position for the present.

October 11, 1883.

A large number of ladies present—drawn by the announcement in the press that Mrs. Thropp Cone, of Valley Forge, would read a paper. The chair introduced the lady who read a paper entitled "A Plea for Valley Forge." The paper was well written and read in fascinating manner, and gave a lucid account of the sufferings of the early settlers of that part of the State from the Indians.

A motion was adopted thanking the lady for the address, and a committee was appointed to prepare a paper in behalf of the object set forth in the paper read, consisting of Messrs. Irwin, Fleming, Killen, Gormly, and President Parke.

J. P. Fleming, Esq., read a paper showing "man's inhumanity, etc." Many years ago an emigrant reached our city, and as this world's goods were scarce with her, she settled in what was then known as Pipetown—now the upper part of the Second Ward, where she took in washing, and by dint of perseverance acquired some means. Some time after her settlement here she desired to see a friend in the country some distance from the city, and making her journey on foot, called at a fine looking farm house to rest a short time and make inquiries as to her destination. The owner a pleasant old man engaged her in conversation, inquired of her as to her native place and name; on learning which he swooned. He was her own father. He had left his wife and family in the old country; came to this country, married again and raised another family. The daughter left the recreant father and the next day reached her sister who only lived a few miles from her unnatural father, in ignorance of the fact.

President Parke read an elaborate eulogy on the late H. H. McCullough, at one time a prominent wholesale druggist, of Pittsburg, who suffered heavy pecuniary loss in the great fire of April 10, 1845, and who died May 3, 1883, at Newark, N. J.

The following persons were elected life members of the Society, viz; C. G. Donnelly, Chas. C. Dickey, John Davis, A. M. Samuel, P. Schriver, Henry Irwin, Thos. Brown and James W. Drape.

Corresponding members. Henry C. Wagner, Sec'y Historical Society, Baltimore; Rev. Cyrus Cort, Greencastle, Franklin Co., Pennsylvania; W. H. Egle, M. D., Harrisburg, Pa.; R. B. Chamberlin, New Brighton, Pa.; George Connell, M. D., Youngstown, Ohio; Boyd Crumrine, Washington, Pa.; J. T. Shryock, (Editor,) Zanesville, Ohio; Silas Farmer, Historian, Detroit, Mich.; Mrs. Kate B. Sherwood, Editress, Toledo, Ohio, *Sunday Journal*; Miss Amelia Thropp, Sec'y Valley Forge Monumental Association; Mrs. M. E. Thropp Cone, Valley Forge, Pa.; Rev. Horace E. Hayden, Wilkesbarre, Pa., annual member, Patrick McGaw.

November 8, 1883.

The Society considered the offer of Mr. Andrew Carnegie, November, 1881, which has been very quiet for some time; but with a view of bringing it before the public the matter was discussed this evening. The debt of the city having exceeded the constitutional limit, the municipal authorities hesitate to obligate themselves to pay the $15,000 annual interest, for the support of the Free Library.

The Recording Secretary asked to be relieved of the duties of Corresponding Secretary, and an election was held that resulted in David W. Miller being chosen to fill the vacancy.

J. P. Fleming, Esq., offered the following resolution:

Resolved, that the Secretary be instructed to solicit the attendance at our meetings of Professors Luckey, Morrow and Johnston, Superintendents of the cities and county, with a view of awaking in them an interest in the object of our Association, and through them cultivating in the pupils of our schools a taste for the study of the early history of Pennsylvania.

Mr. L. H. Eaton endorsed the resolution.

The following gentlemen were elected life members, viz: Leonard H. Eaton, Edward Gregg, Brice Lemmon, Dr. Robert B. Maury and Charles Harrison. Annual member Samuel Fields.

December 13, 1883.

A large audience was attracted this evening, evidently from the interesting papers to be read. The first paper was that of the Rev. A. A. Lambing, entitled, "Céloron's Expedition," from Canada, to the Allegheny river, thence down the La Belle rivière, now known as the Ohio. This expedition took place in 1749, and was attended with much danger, as several of the Indian tribes in those early days were very unfriendly, and the risk was intensified to the expedition. The party was French, and to carry out the plan then followed by France, they had a number of leaden plates cast with inscription asserting the claim of their nation, which they buried at different points on the route. Only one or two of those plates have, as yet, been found. A part of one that was discovered is now in possession of the Historical Society of Massachusetts.

Prof. T. J. Chapman, principal of the North Public School followed, in a carefully prepared article, entitled "Old Time Slavery in Pennsylvania." This paper abounded in facts in reference to the old and barbarous system of human bondage as it existed in the latter part of the past and the beginning of the present century. The paper was an *exposé* of the once boasted "Social System" of the Southern States, that met its death in the late Rebellion.

Prof. D. C. Holmes, one of the oldest educators in our public schools, submitted a paper giving his experience as a teacher, pointing to many, as his former pupils, who are now occupying places of honor and distinction among their fellow-men, viz.: Judge John H. Bailey, James O'Hara, Isaac Craig, Thomas P. Blair, N. K. Wade, James B. Scott, Rev. George W. Scott, Dr. J. Grey McCandless, Samuel Harper, George H. Anderson, and many others.

The following list of life members was announced, viz.: Francis Torrence, Theo. Sproull, Charles Lockhart, Finley Torrens, John G. Holmes, John E. Parke, John Fullerton, James P. Fleming, Captain John M. Killen, Rev. A. A. Lambing and W. M. Gormly. Annual members, John W. McCully, Charles Ream and Dr. George H. Kyser.

The Secretary made the following acknowledgments of donations to the Society, viz; from James F. Wilson, an old Day Book of —— Barker, dated 1803, also "Harris' City Directory" for 1839, from A. Westerwelt. A pamphlet from the Historical Society, Buffalo, N. Y. Also a crude iron handcuff, from the late Joseph H. Kuhns, of Greensburg, Pa. Mr. K. stated that it was found at the depth of about ten inches in his garden and it was presumed to have been used during the Whiskey Rebellion of 1791–1794.

Judge Parke read a paper on the occupancy of "Valley Forge" as a National Park, in which he stated that Senator Vorhees, of Indiana, had ably advocated the project. He also stated that he had been informed of an Indian execution that had taken place at the corner of Wood street and Fifth avenue, between the years 1760 and 1776.

January 10, 1884.

The great snow storm that prevailed on the 8th inst., by which the streets were rendered almost impassable prevented many members from being present, and there being no quorum the Society adjourned to February 14.

February 14, 1884.

Rev. A. A. Lambing read a very logical answer to criticisms on the paper he had read at the December meeting; his critic wrote under the *nom-de-plume* of "De-un-daga," in the *Chronicle Telegraph*.

James W. Drape, Esq., read a carefully prepared paper on the "Discovery of Petroleum, or Rock Oil, in Pennsylvania." Mr. Drape dated the discovery of this important factor in the commerce of the Keystone State to the commencement of this century; it steadily grew up to about the year 1858 or 1860, when it entered actively the marts of commerce, and is to-day one of the largest branches of industry in the State. The products of Pennsylvania's oil wells are distributed to all parts of the world; even the ancient city of Jerusalem is lighted by oil from our State.

Jas. P. Fleming, Esq., one of the vice presidents of this Society sent an interesting letter from Florida to the Society, describing many of the ancient Spanish landmarks founded when that nation occupied that portion of our country.

Hon. Thomas Mellon and William H. Smith, were admitted as life members of the Society.

It was resolved that every member of the Society reading a paper before it be required, and every person not a member reading a paper be requested to leave a copy with the Secretary; and that such paper be the property of the Society, but cannot be published without the consent of the writers.

March 13, 1884.

An interesting paper was sent from Rochester, Pa., giving a history of the Pittsburg Novelty Works, established 1833, by L. R. Livingston. The writer states that he was a former employe in the establishment, also that some of the other employes acquired a national reputation, viz: Bartley Campbell and the Vandergriffs. Some came out preachers, lawyers, doctors, judges, mayors,

legislators, and one of the boys arose to the dignity of United States senator.

W. Gibson Miller, a steamboat clerk of forty years ago, contributed a racy and well written paper on the manners and customs of steamboat life in his early days. The paper was replete with interesting incidents of the river, and the customs then prevalent before the days of railroads in Pittsburg. The competition for passengers and freight fully equaled the great rivalry of the trunk lines of railroad from New York to the broad expanse of the western prairies.

Rev. A. A. Lambing contributed an interesting article, entitled "Detached Papers." This paper brought out facts of the early history of Pittsburg, heretofore unknown.

With this meeting will close the first five years of the existence of the Society. The compiler of this digest of the proceedings of the past half decade of our history desires to express thanks to God for his goodness to us as a Society. We have had so many opportunities to meet together, and by our intercourse with one another, to be enabled to accomplish much in securing historical facts that otherwise would never have been brought to light. "As iron sharpeth iron, &c.," so have our memories been refreshed and we have been permitted to toil and labor that in long after years others may perchance be benefitted by the "seed we have sown." The compiler of this synopsis of the work, would be derelict in his duty if he did not acknowledge the kind courtesies of the members of this Society to him in overlooking his imperfections, as scribe for these past five years; and his desire is that one more competent and faithful will be secured to fill his place.

A committee was appointed, consisting of Capt. J. M. Killen, Rev. A. A. Lambing, and Prof. L. H. Eaton, to review, revise and prepare the aforesaid work for publication. It is now committed to the tender mercies of the committee for their unbiased judgment.

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